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THE PERSONIFICATION OF EIRENE FROM THE EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE IN PHILIPPOLIS/ PLOVDIV

Abstract: The mosaic with the personification of Eirene is part of the pavement mosaics of the episcopal residence in Philippopolis/Plovdiv in Bulgaria. Revealing its meaning is the aim of the article. Historical arguments and the recent excavations of the Episcopal basilica in Plovdiv show that it has been built in the 30s of 4th century. At that time it was connected by a new cardo with the Episcopal residence not far from the basilica and dwelt by the Arianic bishops of the city, dominant in that part of Thracia during the Constantinian period and till Theodosius I. In 381 he held the Church Council in St. Irene of Constantinople and restored back the Orthodoxy in the East empire and sent new Orthodox bishops to Philippopolis. The Episcopal residence has been covered with mosaics in the period after 381 and the beginning of 4th century. The pearl pendulia of Eirene show almost the same date. Eirene belongs to the second type of personifications as bejeweled woman but is strongly classicizing and with more balanced and moderate appearance compared to the lavish and fashionable personifications. This is the influence of the third type of personifications as older, modest and ascetic women, personifications of the Church and the synagogue. At the end, a possible route for the stational processions of Philippopolis has been offered based on our knowledge today of the Early Christian Monuments in the city.

Key words: Philippopolis, Late Antique, Early Christian, mosaics -Philippopolis, Late Antique, Early Christian, mosaics, personification

The Episcopal residence in Philippopolis in Thracia, now Plovdiv in Bulgaria, has been erected and decorated in several building periods. In the first period this rich house (Pl. I, No 11)¹, built probably already in the 3rd

¹ M. Bospachieva, *The Late Antique Building EIRENE with Mosaics from Philippopolis (Plovdiv, Southern Bulgaria)*, *Archaeologia Bulgarica* 7/2, (2003), 83-105; V. Popova, *Bodenmosaiken aus dem sog. Haus der Eirene*, in Renate Pillinger, A. Lirsch, V. Popova. *Corpus der Spätantiken und Frühchristlichen Mosaiken Bulgariens* (Wien, 2016), No 40, 174-198, with references.

century, was a private domus, situated very near to the agora of Philippopolis². Meanwhile, many changes happened in 4th century in the previous Roman city planning, except the building of the Episcopal basilica, the transformation of the private domus into episcopal residence, and the erecting of the new Eastern thermae (Pl. I, No 2). All they together have taken part in the transformation of the city orthogonal grid. The thermae in the eastern part of the city have been built over a cardo, by that blocking its functioning entirely. This supposes that a new street has been created instead. The basilica has occupied partly the south end of the insulae next to it from the north, and here a portico with entrance leading to the inner court of the basilica has been erected. It is very likely that a new city piazza has been formed namely in front of the portico. Since the old agora stopped to be the centre of the city life, now it was concentrated around the Episcopal basilica with its piazza. And the third change was that the episcopal residence was connected with the basilica directly by a new cardo, by that changing the length of several insulae between the residence and the basilica. Usually in Late Antiquity the episcopal basilica is situated next to the cathedral of the city, but since in Philippopolis the basilica was occupying too large space, surrounded by other older buildings, there was no possibility to include the residence too in the new planning. The solution was to accommodate some of the representative domus situated not far to the northwest from the basilica. As a result, several previous normal insulae have been diminished, the earlier buildings on the way of the new cardo dismantled, the cardo passing immediately west of the basilica and connecting the residence and the basilica with the other buildings in the area.

The episcopal residence was also involved in the new Christian rhythm and life of the city and gradually embellished by its mosaic decoration. Now we can only guess which were the concrete circumstances and the way the domus has been transformed into Episcopal residence: either as donation, or sold to the Church and the bishop, or in any other way. The plan of the residence (Pl. II, 1 and 2), excavated only partly, reveals a long domus alongside one of

² In the middle of 4th century it maybe was already belonging to the Arianic bishop of Philippopols. Important details for the situation then can be extracted from the reports on the Church Council of 343, 344 and 347, held in Serdica. (On the Council see M. DelCogliano, 'The Date of the Council of Serdica: A Reassessment of the Case for 343', *Studies in Late Antiquity: A Journal* 1.3 (2017), pp. 282-310; J. Ulrich, *Nicea and the West*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Mar., 1997), 10-24; L. Barnard, *The Council of Serdica in 343 A. D.*, (Sofia, 1983). At the Council the Orthodox and the Arianic bishops did not come to an agreement on the most important doctrines of Christianity. As a result, the Arianic bishops left Serdica and went to Philippopolis to have their own Council. Of course, they should have at disposal places to gather and discuss, as well as to dwell, and most probably these were the erected not long before the Council the Episcopal basilica and the Episcopal residence (Pl. I, NoNo 10 and 11). The recent excavations of the huge Episcopal basilica of Philippopolis of the Roman type, the biggest one found in Bulgaria (long 86.33 m and wide 38.50 m), revealed that it belonged to the Constantinian period, and that its first building period finished around the end of the 30s. It seems that in 343 namely this basilica housed the Arianic bishops, and the bishop of the city has probably invited them in his residence, at that time still not covered with mosaics. See E. Kantareva-Decheva, St. Stanev, (in print), *New mosaic floors in the Episcopal basilica of Philippopolis*, Proceedings of XIV Conference of Association Internationale pour l'Étude de la Mosaïque Antique (AIEMA), (Nicosia, Cyprus, 15-19 October, 2018).

the decumani, and with a inner peristyle court. In the second period from the second half of 4th - beginning of 5th century it has been additionally enlarged with a new apse (probably with stibadium), serving as the new aula. Anyway, the change of the ownership from a domus of a distinguished citizen to the episcopal residence has happened enough early in 4th century, so that the first bishop of Philippopolis, dwelling the residence, was Arianic. The dominance of the Arians in the city continued till the reign of Theodosius I, when the emperor restored the Orthodoxy in the East Empire and Philippopolis. The name Disiderius appears on the Greek mosaic inscription in the vestibule of the residence³, saying: 'Disiderius.... covered with mosaics'. The Greek verb denoting 'to cover with mosaic' is met for the first time, and was unknown in scientific literature up to that moment⁴. It is not sure to whom it refers (to the previous civil owner, the mosaicist or to a concrete Orthodox bishop).

The floors of the episcopal residence have been laid with mosaics in two phases of the second building period. In the first phase the main reception hall has been covered with mosaics consisting of three panels with figural motifs (Pl. II, 2): the first one with the representation of Eirene (Pl. III, 1 and 2), placed in the centre of a complex geometric-ornamental scheme; the second one with a cantharos with wine; only half survived from the third one⁵. A new mosaic inscription greeting the visitors has been added in front of the fountain,⁶ saying: 'Welcome! Happiness!'. It can be supposed that initially there has been laid a third figural image or entirely non-figural composition, placed in a circle or octagon frame, later replaced by the fountain. But if all three representations were initially figural, they should form a special program of Early Christian symbols. Two of them survived: the cantharos with wine, the symbol of the Eucharist, and the personification of Peace.

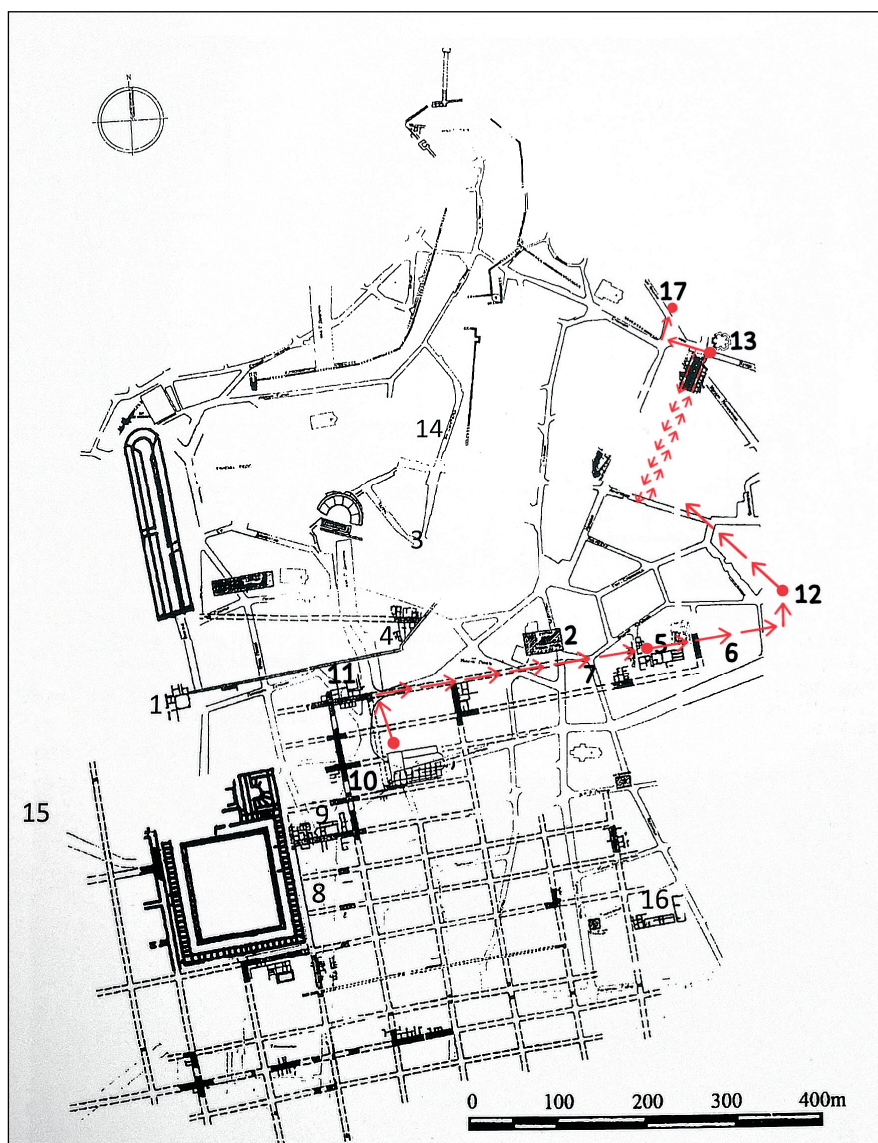
Eirene is represented as a haloed dignified middle-aged woman, in a white veil falling to the shoulders, and jewellery on the head and around the neck. The inscription 'Eirini', divided in two parts, is placed from both sides of the head on the ground of the blue nimbus. The main problem with this rare and quite unusual monument is the identification with a certain meaning of this personification: was Eirene a usual personification of Peace in a private domus of Philippopolis during the Late Antiquity, embodying Peace with pacifistic accent, or did she embody another and special Early Christian doctrinal notion? Seeking for the answer, it is necessary to analyze the types of representations of women as different personifications and allegories in Late Antiquity, including

³ Popova, Bodenmosaiken, 189-190.

⁴ M. Donderer, *Die Mozaizisten der Antike. Epigraphischen Quellen – Neufunden und Nachtragen*, (Erlangen 2008), 93-94, Nr. c. 2, Taf. 24,2; N. Sharankov, AE, (2003) (2006), No 1572.

⁵ The upper rectangular part of it contains a centralized composition of swastika-meander, while from the lower part placed in a square field have been preserved only the corners with plant fillings. This part of the third mosaic panel has been replaced in the succeeding phase by a fountain. It was decorated atop with a dolphin, found during the excavations, from which the water was pouring down.

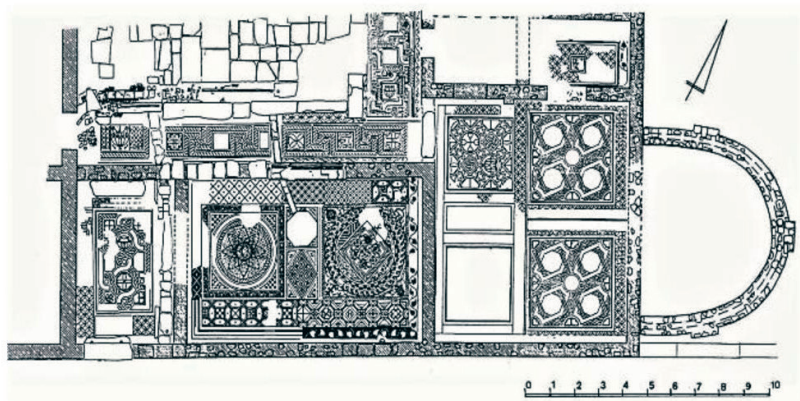
⁶ Popova, Bodenmosaiken, S., 184, with references.



Pl. I. The Episcopal basilica No 10; the Episcopal residence No 11; the Eastern thermae No 2; the synagogue turned to basilica No 5; the Small basilica No 12; The martyrium extra muros No 13; the basilica on Djambaztepe No 14; the monastery extra muros No 17.

the ones with the name of Eirene, to date the personification from Plovdiv, and to find out the relationship between our Eirene and the other personifications and its meanings.

In Late Antiquity there appeared in literature and visual arts many new representations of women as personifications (Pl. IV, 1-2; Pl. V, 1-3 and 5),



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Pl. II. 1. The episcopal residence in Philippopolis. Drawing of all pavement mosaics (after M. Bospachieva); 2. The earlier reception room of the episcopal residence in Philippopolis. Colour drawing of the mosaic schemes (after M. Bospachieva).

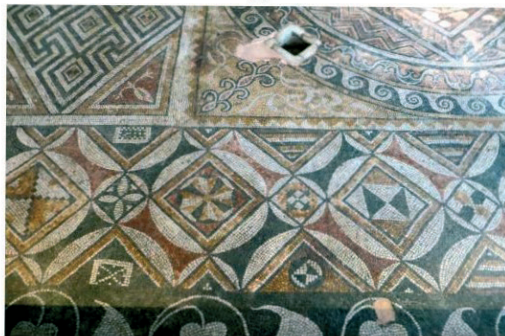
together with the old ones of seasons, months, winds, the god of time Aion, rivers, countries, provinces, cities and the Muses. Particularly more than 33 abstract notions have been used on the Roman coins, in literature and in everyday life, such as Homonoia, Virtue, Spes etc., and the interesting for our topic



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Pl. III. 1. The personification of Eirene. Floor mosaic from the episcopal residence before conservation; 2. The personification of Eirene after conservation; 3. Detail from the mosaic in the room with Eirene.



Pl. IV. 1. Personification of Eirene as spring. Mosaic from the Petra church; 2. Personification of Eirene as spring. Mosaic from the synagogue in Zippori; 3. Muse from the mosaic with 9 Muses from Cos, Rhodes, The Palace of Grand Master; 4. Mosaic portrait of Simplicia. Vatican museum; 5. Coptic tapestry with orant; 6. Mosaic with the Epiphany from the basilica in Teano in Italy. Around 370.



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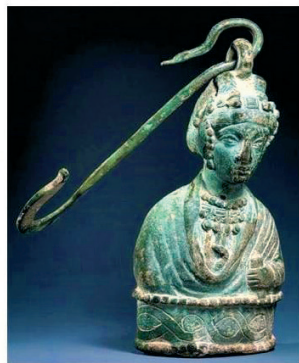
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Pl. V. 1. Mosaic from Sinope with the personification of Tryphe; 2. Mosaic from Antioch with the personification of Epikosmesis; 3. Mosaic from Syria with the personification of Tryphe and Bios; 4. Mosaic with the donors from the peristyle of the episcopal residence in Olympos, Turkey; 5. Mosaic with the personification of Tyche and three written personifications in the episcopal residence in Olympos, Turkey.

notion of Peace - Pax. Now to them have been added the personifications of Life (Bios or Charis), Beauty, Pleasure (Tryphe), Wealth (Ploutos), Prosperity, Fecundity (Fecunditas), Enriching (Chresis), Building and Foundation as donation (Ktisis), Agora, Good Weather (Kalokeria = Kalokairia), Adornment (Kosmesis), Strength and Power (Dynamis), Education (Paideia), Philosophia, Greatness of Soul and Largeness (Megalopsychia), Wisdom, Prudence and



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Pl. VI.1. Steelyard weight of empress portrait from the Theodosian period; 2. Detail from the mosaic of Noheda, Spain; 3. The mosaic portrait of Justinian from San Apollinaire Nuovo in Ravenna; 4. The bronze coloss of Bartletta; 5. The mosaic with the personification of Kosmecic; 6. The mosaic with the personification of Ananeosis from Theodorias.



Pl. VII. 1. Personification from the ceiling in Trier. Wall painting; 2. Mosaic from Antioch with the personification of Ge; 3. Personification of Ge. Coptic tapestry, Pushkin Museum Moscow; 4. Mosaic with the personification of Kalokairia from Palestine; 5. Personification of Autumn. Coptic tapestry; 6. Mosaic with the personification of Apolaysis; 7. Mosaic with the personification of Megalopsyche. Antiochia.

Knowledge (Sophia and Phronesis) etc⁷. Often we can observe in the hands

⁷ My gratitude to Prof. M. Slavova for the translations from Greek and Latin and the consultations. For the personifications I shall list only the works important for my study, because the literature is growing every day. See G. Downey, 'Personifications of Abstract Ideas in the Antioch Mosaics', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 69 (1938), pp. 349- 363; H. Maguire, *The Mantle of Earth*, *Illinois Classical Studies* 12.2 (1987), 221-28; H. Maguire, *Rhetoric, Nature and Magic in Byzantine Art*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1998); R. Shorrock, *The Myth of Paganism: Nonnus, Dionysus and the World of Late Antiquity* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011); J. D. Sieger, *Visual Metaphor as Theology: Leo the Great's Sermons on the Incarnation and the Arch Mosaics at S. Maria Maggiore*, *Gesta* 26.2 (1987), 83-91; E. Stafford, J. Herrin (eds.), *Personification in the Greek World: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, (Aldershot: Ashgate



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Pl. VIII. I. 1. Mosaic with Venus from the villa in Bignor, Great Britain; 2. Portrait of the queen Zenobia. Hermitage. Marble; 3. Coptic tapestry with Dionysos.



Pl. IX. 1. Gold medallion of Licinia Eudoxia; 2. Solidus of Licinia Eudoxia; 3. Solidus with Licinia Eudoxia.

of the personifications such habitual attributes as golden vessels full of wine, jewellery, golden coins, flowers, fruits, metal or rod measures used in building, etc.⁸ Usually these are very beautiful and lavishly bejewelled women, with the classic or the dominant for the period headdress, diadems, crowns or special attributes on the head. It is considered that the iconography and attributes of the Late Antique empresses have strongly influenced the iconography of the female personifications⁹.

Publishing Ltd, 2005); G. E. Borromeo, *Tyche-Fortuna: The Personification of Chance and Imperial Cities*, in Sh. Bonde (ed.), *Survival of the Gods: Classical Mythology in Medieval Art*, (Providence, RI: Brown University, 1987), 79-84; W. Watson, *The Art of Personification in Late Antique Silver: Third to Sixth Century AD*, 2 vols, (PhD, University of Sussex, 2013); B. Küllerich, *The Image of Anicia Juliana in the Vienna Dioscurides: Flattery or Appropriation of Imperial Imagery?*, *Symbolae Osloenses* 76, (2001), 169-190.

⁸ See also I. Baldini, *Ktisis, misura e simbolo dello spazio tardoantico*, *Dialoghi con bisanzio. Spazi di discussione, percorsi di ricerca Atti dell'VIII Congresso dell'Associazione Italiana di Studi Bizantini* (Ravenna, 22-25 settembre 2015), (Spoleto 2019), t. I, 31-44; N. Kourkouta, *The Perception of the Woman in the Post-Roman Period through the Representations of Personifications on Mosaic Floors (in Greek)*, PhD dissertation, (Athens, 2017); C. A. Marinescu, S. E. Cox, R. Wachter, *Paideia's Children: Childhood Education on a Group of Late Antique Mosaics*, in A. Cohen, J. B. Rutters (eds.), *Constructions of Childhood in Ancient Greece and Italy*, *Hesperia*, suppl. 41, (2007), 31-44.

⁹ L. James, *Good Luck and Good Fortune to the Queen of Cities: Empresses and Tyches in Byzantium*, in (E. Stafford, J. Herrin (eds.), *Personifications in the Greek World: from Antiquity to Byzantium*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 293-307; R. Leader-Newby, *Personifications and Paideia in Late Antique Mosaics from the Greek East*, in *Personifications in the Greek World*, pp. 231-246. A parallel between the lavishly dressed and bejewelled empress and her highest status and the personification of prosperity and wealth has been constantly drawn. The representation in the attire and attributes of the empress was believed to bring to the empire and to every its citizen the same well-being. Placing such a figural

Many of the old and the new personifications are haloed being compared by that to deities because of its supernatural power, strength and high virtues, and hence its appreciation in the Late Antique culture¹⁰. They were neither deities, not magical representations, but on the blade between them; they had quasi-religious status, closer to secondary gods and spirits. They stood instead of the holy Early Christian depictions, which could not be placed on the floors and to be stepped over, while this was possible to do upon the personifications. On the other hand, they have been deemed as very helpful in 'bringing' to the community and the individual the qualities and events necessary for good life, well-being, health and protection against the malevolent forces. As in the period of 4th-beginning of 7th century these beliefs have been still in regulations, although some theologians and thinkers were against them, they were generally accepted in the Late Antique culture. The shift happened only when, for instance, instead of Tyche as protector of the city, Theotokos took her place¹¹. This replacement concerns also the saints and martyrs, the Cross and all the Christian figures in the Byzantine culture, but it was a long process of three centuries, with slow transformation and replacement. The number of such personifications has significantly increased in the period 4th-6th century in Asia Minor, the Aegean islands, Greece, North Africa and Italy, but afterwards the personifications disappeared and remained mainly in the book illuminations and its mediaeval copies as *paideia* of the virtues and allegories. It is important that these images have been exploited both in pagan and Early Christian buildings¹². The nimbus is another element of the transformation of the Roman and Late antique iconographic elements and its semantics into the Early Christian/Early Byzantine one. Since the Greek and Roman times, the colour of the halo¹³ relates the representation to a definite sphere of the pagan or Early Christian universe: for instance the blue nimbus is preserved for the supreme gods or the heavenly ones, pagan or Christian. It seems that such is namely the case with the personification of Eirene from Plovdiv.

Most often the personification of Eirene in Late Antiquity is depicted as the season of spring on mosaics, wall paintings, Coptic and other textile and minor arts in official pagan monuments, Early Christian basilicas, Jewish syna-

image on a mosaic pavement, it was hoped that the public or religious building, the private residence or the house will be under its protection and against the bad spirits.

¹⁰ G. Osbourne, *Mosaics of Power: Superstition, Magic and Christian Power in Early Byzantine Floor Mosaics*, PH disseration, (Sussex, 2014), v. I, pp. 113-145.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, 120-135.

¹² They were more neutral compared to the nude representations of the pagan deities, heroes and heroines, and near to Christian notions, therefore suitable for the Early Christian decoration. On the other hand, they didn't break with and developed further the ancient traditions of abstract notions. And third, they played a magic-apotropaic role, preventing the buildings, its owners and the visitors from the Evil (now personified by the devil), and assuring the well-being and stability of the Late Antique people and the religious and secular institutions.

¹³ G. B. Ladner, *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies in History and Art*, Vol. I. (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1983), 147-148; K. McGinty, *Circles of Framing and Light: Analyzing the Nimbus in the Mediterranean*, Honors thesis (Department of Classics Dartmouth College, 2013); R. Тодорова-Енчева, *Символ и значение: Концептът за Божията слава в късноримската и византийската иконография*, (Шумен, 2020), 20-49.

gogues and private houses (Pl. IV, 1-2). This first type of Eirene as spring, as well as her other two types, is known in several iconographies, but we shall concentrate only on Eirene represented as a bust. As a spring, she may be accompanied or not by her name, usually without a halo, but always having either flowers or green branches in her hands, or a wreath with flowers and leaves on the head, or a basket with them next to her, and farm tool used in the season. However, in Plovdiv Eirene is not the personification of spring, because not a single attribute of the season is depicted.

The second type is represented to that moment by the only mosaic from Plovdiv. Eirene is a bejewelled woman, haloed, with attributes taken from difficult iconographic sources. The veil in the Greek, Roman and Late Antique culture is a sign of a supreme goddess or of a matron, married woman. New element is the veil bordered with pearls to be met in numerous depictions of real and mythological personalities from the middle of 4th till the middle of 5th century in mosaics, wall paintings and tapestry (Pl. IV, 4-6; Pl. VI,2)¹⁴. Eirene from Philippopolis is bejewelled mainly by pearls not only in the veil, but also in the diadem, the earrings and the necklace: i. e. she is all in pearls, which should denote her brilliancy and radiance. The diadem is a low flat one, decorated with one row of pearls. It seems that four other pearls are forming a four-petal flower high on the headdress on her left side, supposedly also on the other side, but the posture of the head is hiding the second pearl-flower. The motif of two symmetrical flowers in the headdress is taken from the official and private portraits in sculpture, from some cultic images and female personifications on mosaics and in the textile (Pl. V,1; Pl. VII 3, 6 and 7)¹⁵. An attribute is placed atop the middle of the diadem of Eirene reminding a small cross. In reality it is not a cross, but an element of the crowns in Roman and Late Antiquity of goddesses and personifications, descending from the ornamental three-parted ends of the earlier crowns of the Greek and Early imperial times (Pl. VIII, 1-3)¹⁶. However, for the first time in the representation of Eirene (Pl. III, 1-2) can be

¹⁴ Also new is its iconography in the way the veil is falling to the shoulders (Pl. IV,5 and VI,2): here it is repeating its oblique lines, forming a closed silhouette which unites in one whole the head, the veil and the shoulders. This feature is different from the female veiled images earlier than the second half-end of 4th - first half of 5th century, when the ends of the veil are shown either in straight line, or separated from the shoulders, as if 'flying' in the air (Pl. IV, 4 and 6).

¹⁵ B. Küllerich, *Private Portraits in Late Antiquity: Observing the Subject.*, *Roman Sculpture in Asia Minor*, Journal of Roman Archaeology (2011, S80), 359-370, fig. 24,12; F. Tülek, *The Bejewelled Lady of Sinope*, in M. Sahin (ed.), 11th International Colloquium on Ancient Mosaics in 2009 in Bursa, Turkey, (Istanbul, 2011), fig.2.

¹⁶ The central element on the head may be also depicted either as a feather of a Muse, or a rose bud or another flower-bud, or as a high central element made of precious stones. The cross itself as attribute on the head and the diadem is used rarely in the coins and medallions, for instance on those with the portrait of the empress Licinia Eudoxia, wife of Valentinian III from the second quarter of 5th century (Pl. IX, 2-3), and this cross has a specific form and arms. It should be underlined that the diadem and the necklace of Eirene are relatively modest and monochrome, compared to the other more lavishly bejewelled female personifications with precious stones in different colours (Pl. V, 2; Pl. 2 and 5). But at the same time, the radiance of the pearls probably was associated with her completeness and a definite supreme meaning.

observed the pearl pendulia/prependulia hung from the diadem (on the level of the pearl-flowers), and falling down to the shoulders (at each side at least in two vertical rows?). This jewel is considered to appear in 5th century, has a peak in the same period and the next 6th century both in the official imperial male and female images, and its usage continues in the iconography of the medieval rulers. Still it is not clear when namely the pendulum has appeared for the first time¹⁷. More plausible seems that it happened at the end of 4th – beginning of 5th century, from Arcadius to Theodosius II and Pulcheria, first in the female representations, having in mind the steelyards weights in the form of the empress Ancia Eudocia, Pulcheria and Licinia Eudoxia (Pl. X, 1-6); also some other representations in mosaics and round sculpture (Pl. IX1-3). But judging on the base of the monuments, the fashion in the length of the pendulia has been changed several times during 5th and 6th century¹⁸.

From the second quarter of 4th century and especially during 5th-6th century can be traced the phenomenon of mixing the iconographic attributes borrowed from different personifications. For instance, for a long period the representations in the wall paintings in the basilica of Trier have been related to the imperial portraits of Helena and Fausta, or the identification with certain personifications was not firm (Pl. VII, 1). Only later it has been proved that the attributes are originating from different personifications and mixed in a new one¹⁹. That's why in some of them the posture and the attributes are identical, but the names different. If not the mosaic inscription with the name of personifications, the identification can be easily confused. This is a sign that the pick of the spread of the 'pure' and concrete iconographies has passed; now has begun a new process of already 'mixed' iconography and very mobile attributes not

¹⁷ Since it is dangling from diadems and crowns, theoretically it cannot be earlier than the period of Constantine. He was the first to reintroduce the Hellenistic diadem on his coin portraits following the example of Alexander the Great (see L. Ramskold, N. Lenski, *Numismatische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 119, (2012), pp. 31-58), but it could not occur so early in the first half – third quarter of 4th century, because in this period no coin portrait of emperor and empress has been represented with pendulia. Among the predecessors of the pendulia can be pointed some pendants decorating the forehead and the back sides of the complex crown-like turbans on the female heads in Palmyra in 2nd – 3rd century; also the cross-like or diagonal chains (from top of headdress to the ears) of pearls during the classicism in the second half of 4th century, see B. Kiilerich, *The Mosaic of the Female Musicians from Mariamin*, *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia*, n.s., XXII, (2010), 87-107, fig. 6.

¹⁸ Except the long to the shoulders and breasts pendulia in the famous ivory portrait of empress Ariadna and in the mosaic portrait of empress Theodora in San Vitale in Ravenna, there appeared another female type: with the shorter hangings, not reaching to the ears and not hung from the diadem/crown, but attached aside to the headdress itself (Pl. VI, 5-6).

¹⁹ M. Rose, *The Trier Ceiling: Power and Status on Display in Late Antiquity*, Greece and Rome 53 (2006), 92-109. The same combination of attributes has happened in the representations of Earth (Ge, or Gaia), Tyche, the seasons, Isis and her attributes as the headdress, the knot and the diadem (Pl. VII, 2-7). At the beginning of 3rd – 4th century only Ge is holding in front of her a cloth/mantle with the fruits and vegetables, but later in the 5th – 6th century the autumn and the personification of the Good Weather, Kalokairia (Pl. VII,4) also hold the same cloth with the attributes of fecundity, instead of demonstrating them in a basket or on her head or in her hands (Pl. VII, 2-5). A mixture of the attributes between Tyche and Ge can be observed also very often, particularly in the presence of the cornucopia in both cases (Pl. VII,2).

fixed only to one only abstract notion, which point to its less significance and disappearing. The latest example from the episcopal residence in Olympos in Turkey, relating the last building period with pavement mosaics to 6th century, shows a mosaic personification with such mixed iconography (Pl. V, 4-5)²⁰. The inscriptions attest even three personifications combined in one and the same vision of Tyche with the horn of abundance: the donations of the local Christians for erecting (Ktisis) of the porticoes and the fountains with the healing sources in the peristyle of the episcopal residence, giving health and therefore life (Charis) and renewal (Ananeosis) to the visitors. Generally, the process of mixing and new combinations of iconographies borrowed from different sources, is a typical phenomenon for the Roman and Late Antique period²¹.

The first two analyzed types of personifications have been developed and exploited since the Greek and Hellenistic periods up to the end of Late Antiquity, while the third type has appeared in culture and art only from the last quarter of 4th century - beginning of 5th century onwards in the wall paintings and wall mosaics in churches, basilicas and monasteries, although some hints of its future development may be found first in the catacomb paintings in the portraits of bishops and ordained women. The process of strengthening further the spiritual essence can be followed mainly in the third type of personifications and allegories in the graffiti and the wall paintings of the Early Christian Catacombs and on the pavement and wall mosaics of the Early Christian basilicas revealing the new Christian notions. The iconography of the catacomb wall paintings with the name of Eirene is revealing its connection with death, paradise and Christian immortality (Pl. X, 1). The portrait of the deceased is accompanied by the name of Eirene, the formula 'in pace' (resting in peace), and by the pigeon, carrying the olive branch, one of the attributes of Eirene from the pagan times onwards. The special choice of these elements reflects the perception by the Early Christians of death as real peace, as resting in the gardens of the Paradise and receiving there the new everlasting life²². The shift from the

²⁰ G. Öztaşkın, M. Öztaşkın, *Olympos Episkopeionu Peristyl Mozaiklerindeki İnsan Betimlemeler*, Olba, vol. XXVII, (2019), pp. 413-442.

²¹ E. Varner, *Reading Replications: Roman Rhetoric and Greek Quotations*, Art History, vol. 29, no 2, (2006), 280-304; E. Perry, *The Aesthetics of Emulation in the visual Arts of Ancient Rome*. Cambridge, (2005); M. Marvin, *Copying in Roman Sculpture: The Replica Series*, in *Retaining the Original. Multiple originals, Copies and Reproductions*, (Hanover and London 1989,) 29-45. It is also the leading ancient paideia, that the changes in the repertoire are done through this non-revolutionary way, slowly and step by step, keeping the visual cores and long semantic chains and visual forms during the further development, however fusing them into new combinations. The area of personifications was the next one to follow the general characteristics of the Roman and Late Antique art, but with the accent on the much more abstract and deep notions, with stronger interest not only in materiality, pleasure, well-being and natural strength and power, but in morality, donation and spirituality too, when the open-minded soul and person is making a donation for the Early Christian Church and the Christians.

²² The bird is presenting to them the branch as to fulfil the promised by God to the faithful Christians, having in mind that at the time of the Early catacombs they were still out-of-law and persuaded till the Edict of Galerius in 311 and the Edict of Constantine I and Licinius I from 313, when the Peace of the Church was officially ensured. In the portraits of the deceased ordained women, supposedly as bishops. See on them Ally Kateuz, Mary and

bejeweled matrons to the modest ordained women and the new Christian allegories goes further in the first ever appeared images of the Christian Church and the Virgin as Church. Already at the end of 4th century there has been created the allegory of the Church/Ecclesia in Santa Sabina in Rome, shown in pairs together with the Synagogue, as two old women dressed in simple monochrome garments, holding respectively the New and the Old Testament (Pl. X, 6)²³. Similar image of Theotokos as allegory of the same two institutions is supposed also in the two differently dressed women from both sides of the young Christ on the triumphal arc of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome (Pl. X,3)²⁴. In the same way, by opposing pairs are shown young and old, richly and modestly dressed saints and martyrs, for instance St. Perpetua and St. Felicitas on the wall mosaics from the Archbishop Chapel in Ravenna (Pl. X, 4). Again the Synagogue and the Early Christian Church are represented as two middle-aged women, without any jewels, but dressed in rich and bright garments in the apse mosaic of Santa Pudenziana in Rome (Pl. X, 3a and 3b)²⁵.

Under the influence of such church allegories and other liturgical representations, sometimes the personifications of the first and second type may acquire too interpretatio cristiana, demonstrated, for instance, by the maniple in the hands of Ktisis (Pl. X, 5). But here the foundation or building does not mean a private building, but the donation of lavish furniture and precious liturgical items, and the decoration with floor mosaics of the basilicas of Theodorias in Cyrenaika, named in honour of Theodora, the wife of Justinian I. The trend to the modest and ascetic Church, liturgical and sepulchral Christian representations, and to deeper spirituality is the main one in the third type of personifications and allegories, influencing the other personifications too, in one or another degree. Such is the case with Eirene from Plovdiv, with her classic tunica

Early Christian Women. The Hidden Leadership, London, (2019). The garb becomes much simpler, modest and ascetic, of monastic type, around the women is shown the Scripture, and they are holding in their hands the liturgical cloth, known as maniple (*Op. cit.*, 89-93).

²³ F. Bisconti, M. Braconi, *Il mosaico parietale nella Roma paleocristiana: dalla committenza imperiale ai programmi pontifici*, *Il mosaico parietale nella Roma paleocristiana: dalla committenza imperiale ai programmi pontifici*, (Verona, 2015), 47-56, fig. 6-7. The long inscription between both women is concerning the basilica, the pope and the presbyter—donator of the wall mosaic. The women have no decorations and their headdress is hidden under the veil and the bonnet. Such modest portraits can be met also among the catacomb wall paintings of Rome, even of younger women, not haloed, because only Christ, the Virgin Maria, the apostles, the saints and martyrs should be shown with round nimbus, while the eminent donator may appear with a square one.

²⁴ M. Lidova, *Empress, Virgin, Ecclesia, Icon. The Icon of Santa Maria in Trastevere in the Early Byzantine Context*, *Icon* 9, (2016), 17-22. Maria on his left side is younger, bejewelled, with the representative Late Antique headdress, and lavish garbs. Maria on the right side is elder, in a modest black attire and the maniple in her hand, symbol of her ordained status. The difference between both representations should symbolize the glorious mother as empress, who will give birth to Christ, the ruler of all the Universe; but at the same time her deep sorrow and pietas for his already predicted passions, death and sacrifice on the Cross on behalf of the manhood. Generally, it is the first appearance of the new for Rome cult of Maria Regina, following the cult of Theotokos in Constantinople, spread immediately everywhere in the Early Byzantine Empire.

²⁵ Bisconti and Braconi, *Op.cit.*, fig. 5.

and features of the face, dignified posture, moderate and white decorations and heavenly radiance demonstrates such influence, compared to many other too richly bejewelled and dressed women in the fashionable for the period garbs and headdresses (compare it to Pl. VI, 5). She is nearer to the female allegories of both Churches in St. Pudentiana than to the secular personifications with fashionable attributes in the Eastern Mediterranean.

By comparing the figural program of the Late Roman villa at Carranque in Spain, some mosaic greetings, the figural program of the earliest mosaics of the Eirene residence and the mosaics of the porticoes of the episcopal residence in Olympos in Turkey, we can try to distinguish the pagan or the secular paideia from the Christian meaning of the personifications, if such difference exists, and to reveal what namely semantics has been put in Eirene. In Carranque²⁶ the images represent a clear example of pagan repertory and knowledge of the ancient mythology as paideia in 4th century, without any sign of Christianity, so it is a private house of an educated dignitary; the data on the first ever appearing of the pendulium does not allow Eirene from Plovdiv, who also is embellished with pendulia, and laid on the order of the Orthodox bishop, to be related to such pagan personifications, because the empresses in court of Arcadius, Theodosius II and Valentinian III (395 – the middle of 5th century) are the first depicted with pendulia. This data coincides with the shift from Arianism back to Orthodoxy occurring immediately after the Council of Constantinople in 381. Such difference between the pagan mythological, the secular and the Christian context can be discovered in the Late Antique mosaic greetings, being often wishes for health, good life, pleasure, peace, well-being, etc., by that containing much of the essence of the personifications. In the first inscription (Pl. XII, 1) saying 'Health, Life, Joy, Peace, Serenity, Hope' we can observe rather a neutral domestic usage. But in the second inscription (Pl. XII, 2), also private domestic, saying 'In the name of God let it be Consent for our feast', the wish is sanctified by the Christian God. The answer to the question with what was suitable to decorate an episcopal residence, we can observe in Philippopolis in Thracia and Olympos in Turkey: each personification is evaluated through the confirmation of the Christian doctrine and in help of it. Everywhere in the Holy Scripture can be found the virtues bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon the Christians, and most often are described Peace, Goodness, Mercy, Charity, Fidelity etc. Thus, any deed, any act of donating the church, building and decorating it and its area, as is the case with the newly built porticoes and fountains with healing water in Olympos, is conformed with the virtues of a true Christian. The mosaic decoration in the episcopal residences can use personifications, however, under the

²⁶ D. Fernández Galiano, Patón Lorca, C. M. Batalla Carchenilla, *Mosaicos de la vil·lade Carranque: un programa iconográfico*, Actas del VI Coloquio Internacional sobre Mosaico Antiguo, Palencia-Mérida, 1990, (Guadalajara 1994), 317-326. In one of the rooms of the villa in Carranque the central representation is a woman with a green wreath on the head, still not firmly identified (Flora? See, for instance J. Graham, *Seeds of Sanctity: Constantine's City and Civic Honouring of His Mother Helena*, in M. Rakocija (ed.), *Niš and Byzantium*, v. XIV, (2016), 615-634, fig. 7-8. All the mosaics around her show scenes of mythological metamorphosis, punishment and death of the heroes and heroines, with watching them seasons and ancient deities.

condition that they can affirm definite Christian virtues, destined to our fellow man, and most of all to the Lord and the Ecclesia, the latter referred to both as religious institution and cult building. In the case of Eirene from Plovdiv we see the same situation, supported by the mosaic inscriptions telling who has either laid the mosaics (the mosaicist) or commissioned this act (the bishop), and greeting the Christian visitors. In spite of the seemingly standard formulas, they are addressed namely to the Christian visitors (bishops, deacons, ordinary citizen and farmers), and therefore they should be understood as done for God, the Ecclesia, the bishop, and the Christian population of Philippopolis.

It is a fact that Eirene at the moment is the only mosaic personification of the kind in episcopal residence and this is not only because of the lack of another good chance of finding. The notion of Christian God is one of the most complex since the first years of Christianity, known mainly in written form, and especially difficult to be shown as a vision at that period. Supposedly, several more monuments can be added to our Eirene: the mosaic with the head of Eirene, accompanied by the inscription 'Eirene', in a basilica in the western area of Xanthos²⁷; the personification from Carthage (Pl.)²⁸; also the later personifications of the Church from 6th-8th century in Bawit and a book illumination from Paris²⁹. However, the artistic value of the Xanthos monument is quite low and non-expressive³⁰. The identification of the so-called Lady of Carthage is quite uncertain: empress, archangel, personification of Carthage, of the Church of Carthage?³¹. It can be supposed that theologians have put the task of representing such complex abstract notions to the artists and we see their first creations in the case of Eirene and the Lady of Carthage. No doubt, that in its first depiction the inspiration for Eirene has come from Constantinople and the circle of theologians around the patriarch and the court. These are not the fashionable ladies-personifications with secular meaning, but dignified monumental

²⁷ A – M. Manère Lévêque, *Corpus of the Mosaics of Turkey*, Vol. I, Part 2, The West Area, (Istanbul, 2012), No. 39-4, 73-75, figs. 82-83 (lower left corner), 97.

²⁸ B. Poulsen, *City Personifications in Late Antiquity*, in B. Stine, T.M. Kristensen, B. Poulsen (eds.), *Using Images in Late Antiquity*. (Oxbow Books, 2014), 209 - 226.

²⁹ Lidova, *Empress*, fig. 16-19.

³⁰ The iconography can hardly be identified, but she is neither haloed, nor a person because of the lack of such attributes, nor an allegory of the Church because it is a bust, not a figure in full length. In these circumstances, its importance can be looked for in the fact that it is laid in an Early Christian basilica and may be with the same meaning as the mosaic in Plovdiv.

³¹ The scepter and her young age and beauty, very different from the image of the modest and spiritual allegories of the Church and the Synagogue, point rather to a city allegory (although the crown with the city walls is absent), or to some mythological ruler, for instance the founder of the city Dodo(ne). The Lady is also bejewelled and very fine, and the lack of firm iconographic attributes probably hint that in this case the mosaicist also has tried to find the adequate vision of a complex Christian notion in the classical tradition. That this is the Christian benediction (Pl. XI, 3 and 4) can confirm the parallel for her gesture with that of bishop Optimus, her nimbus and her date. Although this mosaic is usually related to 6th century, it is a typical example of the subtle style of the Theodosius I, expressed predominantly in the official imperial portraits in the round and on the reliefs in Constantinople with the representations of the emperor, his wife Aelia Flaccilla, his two sons Arcadius and Honorius, also co-emperors or future emperors, the elite and the Goths serving in the court and the Roman army.

images of abstract Christian notions with the evergreen classicizing appearance and stature, the refinement, the radiance and brilliancy of the pearls and the nimbus. However, in the later personifications of Ecclesia in Bawit, Naxos and Paris the classicism is gone, the abstract style dominant and the strong almost mediaeval stylistics present, so the line of development is quite obvious: from classicism to abstract formalism. This third type predicts the disappearance of the Late Antique personifications and their replacement by the Early Mediaeval allegories.

It also impresses that Eirene is dressed not in the contemporary dalmatica, but in the traditional tunica, descending from the classic prototypes, and more concretely from Kephisodotus' original with Eirene and Ploutos. Eirene from Plovdiv is one of the most classicizing personifications in the Eastern Mediterranean, compared to the Muses of Cos (Pl. IV,3³²). But while for Greece and Asia Minor such classicizing personification is habitual, for Philippopolis the anthropomorphic form is unusual and even foreign for the pavement mosaics from the 4th-6th century³³. Here the only used are the geometric and ornamental motifs, the rich flora and fauna and some basic Early Christian symbols, while images of men and women are entirely absent. The dominant part of the ornamental repertoire and the mosaic schemes of the compositions around Eirene (Pl. III,1) are also quite different from the usual ones in the city. These facts are the solid arguments for the conclusion that the mosaic workshop was itinerary, not local, and that it came from a Greek or Asia Minor centre dealing constantly and traditionally with such classicizing representations, not excluding Constantinople itself, inviting workshops from everywhere.

The date of Eirene is also of special interest for her more definite identification either as general Late Antique personification or as Early Christian one and for the development of the style³⁴. However, for historical, iconographic and stylistic reasons the narrow boundaries of the date of Eirene should be lim-

³² M. L. De Matteis, *Mosaici di Cos. Dagli scavi delle Missioni italiane e tedesche (1900-1945)*, (Atene, 2004), 138-140, cat. No 65, Pl. LXXX.

³³ See NN in Pillinger et al. 2016, No 37-52, 164-268.

³⁴ We have seen that the veil in pearls treated as closed round form and the first appearing of the pendulia in the female portraits are related respectively to the period from the last third of 4th up to the beginning of 5th century. However, the representation from Plovdiv is quite different from the 'subtle style' of the Theodosian Renaissance, because of the massive and solid forms of Eirene, typical for the second part of the Constantinian period and the Valentinians. The classicizing representations of 5th century are either more mild and decorative in the first quarter of 5th century, or more formalized and schematic later. The contradictions in the dating of the style of Eirene and the time of appearing of the pendulia maybe are due to some archaistic qualities of the prototype used by the mosaic workshop, or to some still unknown circumstances of its appearance. The problem is that the stylistic development of the Theodosian period till the middle of 5th century has, in our opinion, is not homogenous, but in several different stylistic phases, not studied yet in details. We can follow at the beginning of this period in the pavement mosaics the bright palette and the classicizing trend of the previous Constantinian and Valentinianian period, with significant novelties in the distribution of the mosaic schemes and the treatment of the non-figural motifs in the puristic style. Only at the end of this earliest period the figural symbols have been re-introduced and later changed by the newly introduced subtle style. During the second part of the reign of Theodosius II a new more formalized and decorative style came into being

ited to the end of 4th – beginning of 5th century, long before the end of the so-called ‘Theodosian Renaissance’, when the style is changing significantly. The example of Eirene reveals that not everywhere the new subtle style has become dominant, and that some workshops, in spite of some ‘fashionable’ attributes as pendulia, were still working in the previous style, preserving the traditions of the classicism. Another argument for the same date is the relatively small presence of the rainbow style in Eirene’s earliest non-figural compositions (Pl. III, 3), which are otherwise widely spread in the period between 70s and the first half of 5th century³⁵.

Therefore, not an Arianic bishop has ordered the mosaic with Eirene, but the first Orthodox bishop in the new situation, which occurred as sequence of the decisions of the Church Council of 381, held by Theodosius I in St. Irene in Constantinople. Of course, on the first place during the Council was the revival of the Orthodox Christianity, of coming back to the unity of all Christians in one only Ecclesia, not torn by heresies, and restoring the Peace in it. Returning to the episcopal residence in Plovdiv, the personification of Eirene had most probably the same main meanings, inspired by the decisions of the Council and the politics and acts of Theodosius I towards the Church³⁶. That is the reason to suppose that the program of the figural images of the mosaics in the initial/earlier reception hall with Eirene of the episcopal residence of Philippopolis was tightly connected with and reflected on the first place namely the Orthodox doctrine and the new Peace of Church. The other meaning of the desire of peaceful days after the Goths’ wars³⁷ could be meant too, but on the secondary plan, because the Orthodox Church needed sharply a new peaceful period, after the first Peace of Church, assured at the beginning of 4th century. During all its legal period of existence, the Church, its theologians, clergy and philosophers put on the first place the official religious politics: everything, beginning with the liturgical acts and up to the choice of the decoration and images was passing through the evaluation of the Christian doctrine and the concrete situation in the Church. This fact is witnessed, for instance by some Early Byzantine coins with crosses and the inscription ‘pax’, written completely or only with ‘p’³⁸. The pax on these already Christian coins is also interpreted in the Christian, and not in the secular pacifistic aspect, different from the notion of the Roman pax

³⁵ R. Kolarik, *Mosaics from Antioch: Chronological Implications for other Regions?*, in M. Sahin, 11th International Colloquium on Ancient Mosaics in 2009 in Bursa, Turkey, (Istanbul, 2011), 519-530.

³⁶ Before the Chalcedonian Council of 451 the patriarch of Constantinople could not point the bishops of Thracia, which was under the authority of the Pope in Rome and his vicariate in Thessalonica; nevertheless, after the Council of 381 this has begun non-officially and probably immediately, proved by a letter of such appointed bishop, complaining to the authorities in Constantinople of the bad weather and the state of his health, and asking to be pointed to serve in places with warmer climate.

³⁷ I. Topalilov, *On the Eirene Mosaic from Philippopolis, Thrace*, Journal of Mosaic Research 11 (2018), 273-286.

³⁸ D. Woods, *The Proclamation of Peace on the Coinage of Carthage under Constant II*, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies 57 (2017), 687-712.

in pagan times³⁹. The Christian notion of Peace contains first of all God as the Only One to give real peace, thought to exist only on Heavens in the Paradise. That's why the first churches and basilicas built in the first half and the middle of 4th century in Constantinople, Rome and Jerusalem were devoted to Christ and His Sofia, His Peace⁴⁰, His Birth, His Cross and His Anastasis. That's why it is also quite possible that the huge basilica in Philippopolis, copying the plan and liturgical setting of the enormous earliest basilicas of Rome during the Constantinian period, was also named Eirene. In its name the builder of the basilica of Philippopolis followed the example of Constantine, who named the first or the rebuilt by him small churches existing in Byzantium before it became Constantinople, either St. Eirene or St. Sophia. That's why the bishop of Philippopolis wanted the vision of the Christian Eirene to be depicted in front of his eyes and of his visitors, but not in the previous secular Roman personification of Pax. The name of Eirene connected in this way both the basilica and the residence literally, while the new cardo did the same in reality. This new for the art Early Christian doctrinal notion was embodied in the earliest known depiction of God as Peace in the form of a traditional and strongly classicizing spiritual personification.

Each bishop should commission images connected with Christianity and the Christian virtues, so a special Christian doctrinal meaning has been laid in Eirene's representation, maybe even poly-semantic, as a long chain of meanings in the spirit of the Early Christian symbols: God as Peace, Peace on the Heaven, the Everlasting life there as Peace, Peace in the Church, Peace in the East Empire, etc.⁴¹. The known mosaic decoration from the Eastern Mediterranean

³⁹ T. Philip, *Pax, Peace and the New Testament*, *Religiologiques*, 11, (Spring 1995), 301-324; Y. Wilfand, *How Great Is Peace: Tannaitic Thinking on Shalom and the Pax Romana*, *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, v. 50, (2019), 223-251. The notion of Peace has faced different conceptions of in the Late Antique culture, in which the imperium and the empress embody the state, the victory over the other countries and the peaceful and prolific development of the state and the well-being of all its subjects and their families; generally, the strong Greek and Hellenistic anthropomorphic tradition of personification of natural powers and abstract notions as women. The most important notion in its development was the Jewish and the Early Christian one of the essence of God as Wisdom and Peace, the latter coming from the adequate Jewish 'shalom'. In the Eastern Greek Mediterranean and the biggest artistic centres like Antioch, Apameia, Alexandria, on the islands like Cos and in Athens, in Constantinople itself as the new capital and the second Rome was realized the fusion of the classicizing visual tradition with the theologian Jewish and Early Christian ones, with long prevailing namely of the ancient female personification of many supernatural powers, and virtues, including peace.

⁴⁰ The Council of 381 has been held namely in the first St. Eirene, which was the main church at that time, as well as several more times, when St. Sophia was burnt and the process of its new building was going on. Eirene and Sophia were considered among the most important features of Christ and churches with these names appeared in many Balkan, Asia Minor and island cities, copying by that the capital.

⁴¹ A bishop will not boast with his own wealth and well-being, but with the Peace in Church, with erecting of new church buildings and its lavish decoration, for which he or the donator may be compared to Solomon's building of the Temple. The bishop would like to have in front of him and his visitors the symbols of Christ, of the Eucharist, of the Paradise, quotations from the texts in the Holy Scripture, etc.

reveals namely such repertory in the episcopeions, similar to that in the basilicas, and often combined with personifications and pure ornamental-geometric compositions, however interpreted in the Christian spirit. This fact leads to the supposition that Eirene from Plovdiv, although made in the same way as many other personifications, is a newly created visional iconography for the supreme Christian notion of God, and maybe among its first iconographies in Late Antique art.

Although another personification may be discovered during the next excavation in the city, it surely will not be Eirene, because of many reasons. Eirene was not a single representation, but a part of the considered program of Early Christian symbols in the initial reception hall of the bishop⁴². The most important circumstance was that such attempts to find a visual form of God as Peace in the traditional form of a female personification and her attributes had no perspective, on the opposite. These were dying images replaced after the end of 6th century by more abstract representations, symbols and signs by the third type of personifications, like the allegory of the Church. The example from Naxos and the book illumination demonstrates that the female busts of the Church are replaced by female figure in full length, carrying a big cross, by the figure of Solomon etc., also very flat, modest and ascetic, more suitable for such abstract notions. That's the main reason not to see more monuments with Eirene as allegory and personification of God. This was just episode in the development of Late Antique personifications and the Early Christian iconography, after which have been found more adequate ones on the eve of the Mediaeval period of development. It can be suspected some gender considerations too under the influence of some leading theologians, in order not to show God anymore in the attire of a bejewelled woman.

The separate excavated monuments of the Early Christian Philippopolis are united not only by the streets, by the supposed one and the same name of the Episcopal basilica and of the personification in the episcopal residence: they have been united by the periodically performed church processions in the city streets with crosses and services, performed beginning from the main basilica and stopping in front of the other Christian buildings, at the Martyrium and

⁴² On the base of the parallels, three possible decisions of this program can be supposed. In the first variant a second personification can be supposed on the place of the future fountain. But in this relatively young period of Late Antique personifications, a single representation is characteristic, not several ones in one room (except the seasons and months). The opinion is that the single personification was believed to be more effective. In the second case, on the example of Kato Paphos in Cyprus (Pl. XII, 2), the panel would contain two types of meander-swastika compositions. Finally if all three panels in the room of Eirene had figural representations, the most possible and the most suitable one would be the vessel with water symbolizing The Fountain of Life, so often met on the mosaics of the Early Christian basilicas, the residences and the private houses of Thracia (Pl. XII, 3). See on the theme V. Popova, *Vons vitae in Late Antique Monuments from Bulgaria*, Studia academia Šumenensia 3, (2016), 154-188, with references. In this case it is not surprising that later in the second phase the mosaic symbol has been replaced by a real fountain, which does not change the essence of the triple symbols: Eirene, the Peace of God and the Church, the cantharos with wine, the symbol of Eucharist, and the Fountain of Life, symbol of Christ, the Christian religion, the Baptism, the Paradise and the promised everlasting life in the Heavens.

some special spots. At this stage of knowledge, few is known for the beginning of the official Christianity and its martyrs in the 4th century in the city. It is supposed that the Episcopal basilica had in its apse a place and construction of the U-typed basilicas (basilicas with deambulatorium) of Rome with relics⁴³. But in the 5th and 6th century there appeared several more basilicas inside the city, the martyrium extra muros from the second half-end of 4th century and a monastery from 5th century, also outside the city and close to the Eastern Gate (Pl. I, No No 13 and 17). If the example of Rome has been copied, but also of Constantinople and the practice of such cities as Parthicopolis in Macedonia, the stational procession should stop in front of every church, with terminal point the martyrium and the monastery extra muros, and after that again coming back to the Episcopal basilica. The principle of the Christian movement is always to walk direct or turn only to the right side, which allows to go to the martyrium partly in one and the same way, and to return back partly in the same way, but on the other side of the street. The street which has been passed twice is leading to and from the Eastern Gate and is the biggest ancient street in Bulgaria, wide 25 m⁴⁴. Only its beginning has been excavated, the rest is covered with houses and other buildings from 18th till 20th century. It is quite possible that this street is long up to the place the orthogonal grid of the city is meeting the irregular part coming from the Eastern Gate. At this place can be imagined a representative piazza, maybe of round or sigma form. The street has been used also for the adventus, the official meeting of the emperor; for the church processions; for the triumphs and military marches and for displaying the statues of emperors, generals and officials with merits to the city. Of course, it was the shortest way to come out, joining Via Diagonalis to Constantinople, or to enter the city from the same Via. That's why the street to and from the Eastern Gate has been most probably twice used in each church procession.

In order to visit all the Christian buildings during the processions, and to stop at the places at which eventually God has saved the Christians during the terrific earthquakes in the area of Philippopolis, suffering periodically from them in Antiquity (and nowadays), as in Constantinople, the people should make several turns on the route. First they could pass by the cardo from the Episcopal basilica to the Episcopal residence, where the bishop would join to them. But generally he was also coming to the piazza in front of the basilica,,

⁴³ Kantareva-Decheva and Stanev (in print). A second but very small basilica has been built in the second part of 4th century on Djambaz tepe, a little higher and not far from the theatre (No 3 on the plan Pl. I). At the present moment there is no data how the church and the Episcopal basilica have been connected by a procession, most probably in the same way as to the theatre, the approach being from the west.

⁴⁴ I. Topalilov, *Porta Triumphalis in Late Antique Thrace*, in *Studies on the 60-anniversary of Prof. Plamen Pavlov, Veliko Tarnovo, 2020*, pp. 309-321, with references.

because this was the usual practice⁴⁵. The martyrion⁴⁶ from the second part of 4th century has been laid with mosaics only in the 6th century, and has become one of the best martyrions in Thracia. It housed the relics of 38 martyrs murdered namely outside the Eastern Gate, the place pointed in the sources. It cannot be doubted that this was the usual place of punishment, before entering the sacral territory of the city and for hygienic considerations. The same place extra muros at the Eastern Gate and near the same important Via Diagonalis has been chosen for one of the martyrions of Serdica too, and in Ephesos there is also Gate of Persecution⁴⁷. It is even quite possible, that before its erecting, the relics have been venerated at the deambulatorium of the Episcopal basilica. The monastery from 5th century north of the martyrion with a venerated tomb was the last point of the procession, before turning back to the city. This is only one proposal for the route of the church processions, having in mind the discovered Early Christian buildings so far. But it seems that Philippopolis, the metropolitan city of Thracia, should possess a greater amount of churches and basilicas to be included in the visits during the processions⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ Than at his residence the route turns to the right and reaches the former synagogue, transformed to basilica (Pl. I, 5) during the reign of Theodosius I, who has issued laws against the Jews and has closed their synagogues. After that the procession reaches the so-called Small basilica (Pl. I, 12), from where it should turn again and find the supposed piazza at the south end of the official street, coming from the Eastern Gate. Here the direction on our plan is shown only presumably because of the lack of excavations namely in that part, and the movement and the joining to the main street could be more direct.

⁴⁶ I. Topalilov, *Mosaik aus dem Martyrium der 38 Martyrer von Philippopolis/Plovdiv*, in Pillinger et alli. 2016, No 49, 257-263, with previous publications of the monument; I. Topalilov, *Mosaik aus einem spätantiken (früchristlichen) Gebäudekomplex in der Alexander Puschkin-Straße*, in Pillinger et alli. 2016, No 48, 254-256, with references.

⁴⁷ V. Popova, *The Martyrium under the Basilica of Saint Sophia in Serdica and its Pavements*, in M. Rakocija (ed.), *Niš and Byzantium XIII*, (2015), 132-133, T. I; Ine Jacobs, *Gates in Late Antiquity. The Eastern Mediterranean*, Bulletin Antieke Beschaving, (Jan 1, 2009), 199, fig. 3, note 18, with references. Not only the martyrs, but also all criminals after being sentenced to death have found it namely on this place, outside the city, and immediately at one of its gates. Besides, there has passed too little time from the persecutions of Diocletian and Galerius to the time of erecting the martyrion, and the place of martyrdom has been remembered very well. It can be questioned where have been buried the martyrs initially, and it seems that it was also in that area, not far from the gate or to the east of it, outside the city walls. This eastern part since Hellenistic and Roman time has served as a huge necropolis, excavated only partly. But the martyrs could be buried far from the usual citizens, even after the end of the necropolis in a non-civilized at all place. However, the place has been remembered and probably visited secretly, supported by the fact that the relics have been taken and brought to the martyrion.

⁴⁸ This expectation concerns especially the area alongside the west side of the official street, visited on the way back, or near the presumable piazza at the cross with the orthogonal grid, or in the southeastern part of the city with two more Early Christian monuments – the unpublished yet painted tomb with the miracles of Christ and the mosaics published by Dyakovich. On the mosaic fragments see Б. Дякович, *Тракийската гробница при Пловдив и некрополът на древния град*, Сборник за народни умотворения, наука и книжнина, т. XXII/XXIII, (1906/ 1907), 1-55; В. Попова, *Старохристиянски мозайки от България*, Изкуство, 23/ 7, (1973), 25-29; I. Topalilov, *Mosaic Pavements of Philippopolis, Thrace*, in

The personification of Eirene from Philippopolis reveals the role of Constantinople in creating the iconography and style of the allegorical image of God as Peace in the Heavens and the Orthodox Ecclesia. The analysis proves too that the period of Theodosian dynasty had strongly influenced the Orthodox already culture of Philippopolis. By that the city had acquired an image of a typical Early Christian city. Eirene was a sign of this new transformation of the city copying the other cities and artistic centres of the Late Antique world, Eastern and Western. However, the solitude of Eirene among the other personifications signifies that the Church has realized that this line of development is not productive, and stopped it in searching of a new, more adequate and almost mediaeval one on the eve of the Middle Ages.

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(самостални истраживач)

ПЕРСОНИФИКАЦИЈА ИРЕНЕ ИЗ ЕПИСКОПАЛНОГ РЕЗИДЕНЦИЈЕ У
ФИЛИПОПОЛИСУ / ПЛОВДИВУ

Чланак разматра семантику мозаика са персонификацијом Ирене из Филипополиса. Упоредивањем са персонификацијама у другим епископским базиликама, доказано је да оне немају секуларни карактер, већ се тумаче у духу хришћанства. Највише истичу хришћанске врлине као што су брига о црквама, донације, градња и украшавање зграда. Штавише, само Бог даје истински Мир, али на небу и у вечном животу. Због тога је Ирена полисемантички симбол Бога као Мира, као Мудрости, Спасења, Вечности и др. Због специфичних историјских и теолошких околности, Ирена се такође сматра алегоријом црквеног мира, који се догодио након повратка православља после Сабора који је Теодосије I сазвао 381. године у Цариграду. Као још један план, Ирена може представљати мир након страшних готских ратова. На крају, предложен је пут за гратске литијске поворке на основу нашег данашњег знања о ранохришћанским базиликама, мучеништву и манастиру у Филипопољу.

6th c. CE. Some considerations, Journal of Mosaic Research 13, (2020), 268-269, fig. 17-18. Although thought to belong to a tomb, the latter mosaics are very near from iconographic and maybe stylistic point of view (since we know them only as black-and white drawings) to the basilical mosaics of 5th century. Maybe this basilica was cemeterial, with burials, which gives the wrong impression of only one tomb, instead of a cemetery with basilica and burials, tombs or crypt. If really coming from a basilica, at that place should remain more significant remnants of the architecture and the mosaics, than covering the smaller space only of a tomb, and this is going to be checked and found out in the future. Generally, the reconstruction of the stational liturgy in the city is a task to be fulfilled in the next several decades following the future discoveries of Early Christian architectural monuments and inscriptions.